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ACTION EUR-00

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INFO LOG-00 AMAD-00 DOTE-00 PDI-00 EB-00 E-00 FAAE-00
UTED-00 TEDE-00 INR-00 LAB-01 DCP-00 PA-00 IRM-00
BBG-00 IIP-00 DRL-00 SAS-00 /001W
-----6BBA33 090917Z /38

P 090836Z DEC 05
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0381

UNCLAS BRUSSELS 004343

FOR EUR/UBI, EUR/PAO, INR/R

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: OPRC, KMDR, BE

SUBJECT: BRUSSELS MEDIA REACTION USA

I. (usa) Secret CIA Prisons

"The Deplorable European Blindness"

Philippe Paquet in independent La Libre Belgique (12/9) (circ. 46,500) editorializes: "Everybody agrees that, during her talks with her 31 EU and NATO colleagues gathered in Brussels for a 'Transatlantic Gymnich' hosted by Belgian Foreign Minister Karel De Gucht, Condoleezza Rice did not give any additional information. Yet, all the participants came out 'satisfied' of the meeting, even those who, like Dutch Foreign Minister Bot, had said before that they were very unhappy with the American explanations on the secret CIA activities in Europe.

"Isn't this ridiculous? How can one reasonably create an opinion for oneself - and even change one's mind - when one has not have received any information? How can one believe in the 'guarantees' that Ms. Rice gave of her government's determination not to allow the use of torture on prisoners of the war on terror when one remembers the atrocities committed in Abu Ghraib? Or when one remembers that, very recently, the White House opposed an unconditional inspection of Guantanamo by the UN?

"At the moment when the EU - and NATO, to some extent - is going through a serious identity crisis, the renunciation of our founding values as a result of the Europeans' complaisant blindness announces the worst

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disasters.

"It is true that terrorists are barbarians and that their elimination certainly requires the implementation of unconventional 'combat' methods. But it is not a sufficient reason to stop being a law-abiding country. That is why the existence of secret prisons and of secret aircraft are violations that should have justified more turmoil, even if that has to take place during a friendly dinner like the one that was hosted by Karel De Gucht Thursday (sic) night."

II. Media reaction report prepared by Gaston De Winter (Dutch) and Pierre Manderlier (French). Tel: 32-2-508-2412.

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